

Quotes on Batterer Program Evaluations

Introduction to *Special Report: Batterer Intervention Programs* reviewing the NIJ-funded experimental evaluations (June, 2003):

“In both studies (Broward and New York City Experimental Evaluations), response rates were low, many people dropped out of the program, and victims could not be found for subsequent interviews. ...The tests used to measure batterers’ attitudes toward domestic violence and their likelihood to engage in future abuse were of questionable validity.... In the Brooklyn study, random assignment was overridden to a significant extent. Which makes it difficult to attribute effects exclusively to the program.”

The CDC review of batterer program evaluation concluded (Briss et al.; 2000, p.4):

“The diversity of data, coupled with the relatively small number of studies that met the inclusion criteria for the evidence-based review, precludes a rigorous, quantitative synthesis of the findings. However, the rudimentary analytical strategy used suggests that the majority of BIP studies reported positive intervention effects for behavioral (i.e., re-assault) and psychosocial outcomes for at least on follow-up period.”

NIJ Research Summary for Judges (Worden, 2003):

Despite an accumulation of studies evaluating programs for domestic violence offenders, rigorous studies are few, and firm conclusions cannot be made yet about intervention effectiveness (Saunders & Hamill, 2003). One of the biggest problems with this sentencing option is compliance, which remains the responsibility of the courts or probation officers (Worden, 2003).

The most recent meta-analysis of cognitive behavioral treatment with violent offenders (20 “high-quality” studies with 74 effects) (Wilson, Bouffard, & Mackenzie, 2005, p. 2005)

“The evidence summarized in this article supports the claim that cognitive-behavioral treatment techniques are effective at reducing criminal behaviors among convicted offenders.”

A recent article on research and policy for child services concluded its critique of the misuses of “effect sizes” computed in meta-analysis (McCartney & Rosenthal, 2000, p. 179):

“Let us use our best judgment when we bring research to bear on policy questions—and, when we do, let us take the time to evaluate effect sizes in context.”